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Are There Too Many Churches in Our Town?

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A Discussion Outline

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THE INQUIRY
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INTRODUCTION

Current Movements for Cooperation and Unity

AT the present time there are many movements toward an increasing measure of church unity or interchurch cooperation. Throughout the country ministers and laymen are freely discussing such things as these: What happened at the World Conference on Faith and Order at Lausanne; the amalgamation of the Presbyterian, Methodist, and Congregational churches in Canada; the proposals made at the General Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church at Kansas City calling for an inquiry into the possibility of the organic unity of that body with Presbyterians and Congregationalists in the United States; the projected union of the Congregationalists and the Christians, with conversations on closer relationship now proceeding between the Disciples and the Baptists, and between the Universalists and the Congregationalists; the various schemes for creating federated churches, or churches affiliated with more than one denomination; the advisability or inadvisability of forming community churches of the undenominational type. What is more, the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America has recently made the question of Chris-

tian cooperation and unity the major item on the program of its quadrennial meeting at Rochester. This has given even greater impetus to the discussion already being carried on, officially and unofficially, in church councils, through the religious press, and in scores of classes, clubs, and other church groups gathering for discussion.

The Community the Focus of this Study

In the midst of such a variety of movements, many church people find themselves confused. Sometimes, though professing a theoretical allegiance to the abstract idea of church unity, they are impatient with those who must concern themselves not with mere abstractions but with concrete issues of a vexed and complicated character. Again, they frequently demand, on the part of national or denominational leaders, action which they themselves would be loath to take in any particular local situation. It would therefore seem to be desirable to furnish such persons with certain helps to a frank discussion of church unity, *not in its larger and more abstract aspects, but in its more concrete forms as a local issue in a particular community.* As people learn the nature and complexity of the problem as it exists in their own communities, they will be better able to contribute something to the discussion of the larger issue as it concerns the nation or even Christendom as a whole. One may

therefore believe that many community groups will welcome an opportunity to discuss the question in this realistic manner. This outline aims to provide the basis for such a discussion.

It is needless to point out that such an immediate purpose necessarily limits the scope of the whole question as treated here. The larger problems involved would probably go beyond the experience of any particular community group and will hardly be more than touched upon in this outline. Nevertheless, what is seen in the microcosm should throw a clear light on what must be dealt with in the macrocosm. With all its necessary limitations, therefore, such a study as is here proposed ought to sensitize a group to the complexity of the larger issues.

The General Plan of this Discussion

The discussion begins by a consideration of certain questions concerning the functions of a church, or if one prefers it, of *the* church. No attempt is made to answer these questions on *a priori* grounds, but the members of the group are left free to develop their own philosophy and to express their own sense of the value and need of the church. Only one discussion has been specifically set apart for this consideration, but some may find the question so fundamental that it will require a series of discussions in itself. For such, help may be found

in a book previously issued by the Inquiry, and entitled *Why the Church?* * This contains questions for twelve discussions on the specific rôle of the church as a social institution of a unique character, together with varied and striking quotations from writers of different schools of thought. Perhaps, in some cases, those who contemplate this study will be well advised to preface it with a complete consideration of the questions proposed there. Others, however, may find the methods suggested in this outline, Part One, Discussion One, sufficient for their immediate purposes and as a means of sharpening their own views concerning the activities by which the church in any given community wisely fulfils its mission.

This initial discussion would also involve some reasonable knowledge of the community as a whole. In some cases, those who participate in the study will have a working knowledge of the history, or present social conditions, of the place in which they live. In other cases, they may find it expedient to invite, to the first meetings at least, persons who, though not enrolled members of the group, may have such knowledge and will, therefore, be able to answer their questions. In this way, they will be able to obtain a better understanding of social trends in the community and the way in which

* *Why the Church?* 104 pages. Price, in cloth, 90 cents; in paper, 60 cents, 12 copies $6.00.

the community is actually organized at the present time. If a community study or survey has been made in recent years, and the results have been published, such material should be furnished to all the members of the group, as a basis of actual knowledge of existing conditions for the whole discussion.

After this initial discussion, the outline calls for the consideration of the next question as to which of these functions may be performed to the greatest general satisfaction by the churches in the community, working independently and divided as they may be at present; which of them by the churches divided in some of their activities, but cooperating in others; which of them, if any, only by some type of united church. In the light of all this, are steps toward union, partial or total, desirable? If this has been answered in the negative, some groups may hesitate to pursue the discussion further. Still, it would be well for them to examine, in the second part of the discussion, some of the possible adjustments which are already taking place in various parts of the country.

If, however, it has been answered in the affirmative, it will then be quite proper for the group to proceed to the second part of the discussion, which invites the consideration of the different types of united church, and presents the values and difficulties in each type. The group is then called upon to determine what, in its opinion and in the light

of local conditions, would be the most fruitful kind of amalgamation which might be effected. There may even be suggested certain difficulties confronting the formation of a united church to which inadequate attention had been given in the first part. If the group is able to come to some general agreement on this point, it may then properly proceed to the third part, in which the study becomes a project calling for action, both in the education of the community itself and in the setting up of the various executive processes essential to the consummation of the type of union desired.

It will thus be seen that this particular outline does not represent either federation or amalgamation of churches as necessarily the solution of the problem in any given community. It simply endeavors to raise such questions as must be faced by those who would come of themselves to a fuller understanding of what is the best solution for their particular home-town.

How to Use This Outline

An effort has been made to include in each outline only such questions as the average group might well consider in the course of one discussion lasting approximately one hour and a half. If, however, for any reason it is impossible to deal with all the questions in the period assigned to it, the questions not dealt with should be considered in the beginning

of the next discussion and not simply omitted in order to maintain a time schedule. More detailed suggestions for leaders of discussion may be found elsewhere, pages 71 to 84.

The Sponsors of This Study

The outline was originally prepared by the Inquiry at the request of the chairman of the Joint Committee on Arrangements of the National Church Comity Conference, which was held under the auspices of the Home Missions Council, the Council of Women for Home Missions, and the Federal Council of the Churches of Christ in America, and which met at Cleveland in January, 1928. It is now sent out in a revised form with the advice and cooperation of these three bodies, who recommend its serious consideration by church groups throughout the country.

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DISCUSSION OUTLINE

PART ONE

Is Any Union of Churches in Our Town Desirable?

CHAPTER I

What Should the Churches in Our Town Be Doing?

IN one of our eastern states is a community called Harmony. "We call it Harmony," say the good people of the place, "because there are no churches there. Instead, we have our Community House of which we are proud and which meets our social needs."

"But," said the Professor, "could you not occasionally hold religious services in the Community House?"

The villagers looked frightened. "If we once introduced religion, that would be the end of Harmony."

Were the fears of the villagers justified? One might admit this, and yet perhaps feel that a community may sometimes suffer from too much harmony. Perhaps Harmony might be better off if it had several churches instead of none. Perhaps no churches at all might be better than merely one. Perhaps the community might have found ways and means of providing a spiritual ministry for the town without running the risks of sectarian division and rivalry.

However we may feel about it, the situation raises ultimate questions concerning what a church might have contributed to Harmony. Were the people of Harmony, in discouraging organization of a church in the community, really missing something of supreme importance to the finer life of the citizenry? If so, what was it? Or were the social activities which they fostered in their Community House adequate substitutes for whatever was of real importance in the work of the churches? Were the elements of the church program which they feared accidental or essential to the proper work of the churches? How does a church actually function in a modern community?

Let us approach the problem not from the point of view of Harmony, of which we know little, but rather from the point of view of our own community, which we shall call Hometown, and of which we ought to know a great deal. What are the churches doing in Hometown? What ought they to be doing? How can they do it?

1. Chart I, on pages 6 and 7, may help us in our quest. We may find there a suggestive list of activities or functions actually being performed at the present time by churches in widely scattered communities. Using this chart, check in the proper columns according to instructions given below. (Each item may well be considered by the whole group, and the check made according to the agreement of the

group. Where there is a difference of opinion among the group as to fact, this indicates the possible need of authoritative information on that point.)

Indicate by a check (✓) in the proper column:

a. The activities or functions performed at the present time by the local church (or churches) represented in this group (Column A).

b. The activities or functions performed by local churches not represented in this group (Column B).

c. The activities or functions performed by local interdenominational agencies, or by organizations outside the churches but habitually related to them, *e.g.*, Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A. (Column C).

d. The activities or functions performed by local organizations or agencies which are entirely non-sectarian and secular (Column D). [Include the name of the organization.]

e. The activities or functions at present performed by no organization, religious or secular, but which ought to be performed by some organization in Hometown (Column E). [Do not check here any function which you do not honestly feel to be really needed in your community.]

2. Add to the list, and put checks in appropriate columns,

a. Other activities and functions, not already mentioned, but which are being actually carried on at the present time by any of the Protestant churches in Hometown (Columns A or B).

b. Other activities and functions which are actually being

CHART I

TYPE OF ACTIVITY OR FUNCTION	Carried on by religious organizations in Hometown.			D.	E.
	A. By churches represented in our group	B. By churches not represented in our group	C. By undenominational organizations	Carried on by non-religious and secular organizations in Hometown. (Give names of Organizations.)	Not carried on by any organization but should be.
1. Conduct Forums					
2. Provide supervised recreation					
3. Conduct Sunday Schools ..					
4. Hold Discussion Groups for adults (Bible Classes, etc.)					
5. Provide Community Houses.					
6. Encourage amateur dramatics					
7. Provide gymnasiums.....					
8. Organize Men's Clubs.....					
9. Organize Women's Clubs....					
10. Organize work for young people					
11. Administer Sacraments					
12. Conduct Worship					

CHART I *Continued*

	A.	B.	C.	D.	E.
13. Provide club life for boys...					
14. Provide club life for girls...					
15. Sustain missionaries.....					
16. Provide training in choral music					
17. Look after the poor.....					
18. Comfort the bereaved.....					
19. Manage Parochial Schools...					
20. Establish hospitals.....					
21. Manage day nurseries and kindergartens					
22. Provide cemeteries.....					
23. Provide pastoral oversight...					
24. Offer fellowship to the lonely					
25. Conduct bridge parties.....					
26. Hold Prayer Meetings.....					
27. Rescue criminals, drunkards					
28. Conduct evangelistic work...					
29. Conduct athletic contests....					
30. Preach					
31.					

carried on by active churches in other communities of which you have knowledge:

i. for men and women,
ii. for young people,
iii. for boys and girls.

[If you consider these activities worth carrying on in Hometown, and no other organization is doing them at present, put check in Column E.]

3. Note now those activities which you have checked both in one or more of the first three columns (A, B, or C) and also in D, as being carried on at the present time both by religious and secular organizations.

a. Which of these activities, if any, do you feel might well be carried on exclusively by secular organizations?

b. In each of these activities which you have just mentioned (under 3a) state how, in your opinion, the work done by the churches compares with that done by the secular organizations, with particular regard to

i. scope—*i.e.,* number and character of people reached;
ii. equipment provided;
iii. leadership available;
iv. thoroughness and results of work done;
v. ultimate purpose of work done.

c. In the light of your discussion under 3b, which of the activities do you still feel might well be carried on exclusively by the secular organizations?

d. If any of the special activities now under consideration were carried on exclusively by non-sectarian organizations, should the churches be invited to appoint representatives on the various boards responsible for their promotion? Why? Why not?

e. Which of the activities and functions designated on the chart as performed at present by both religious and secular organizations should be continued by religious organizations, whether they are continued by the secular organizations or not? Why?

4. Note the various activities which are indicated in Column E as being needed in Hometown but not being carried on by any organization at present: Which of these activities would you prefer to see carried on

a. by the municipal government?
b. by non-sectarian organizations?
c. by churches or religious organizations?

Give the grounds for your preference in each case.

5. In the light of the discussion to date, state what, in your opinion, constitutes

a. the peculiar responsibility of a church or religious organization
   i. for its own membership,
   ii. for the people of the community at large.

b. the most fitting and effective activities for a church in your community to promote in fulfilling these responsibilities.

SUGGESTED READINGS

C. O. P. E. C. Commission Report, Volume XI: *The Social Function of the Church.* New York, Longmans, Green and Company, 1924, 262 pages, paper, price $1.00.

Special sections on various aspects of preaching and teaching, direction and discipline, the Christian discus-

sion of problems, social service, worship, fellowship, etc. Section XII summarizes the principal recommendations of the commission.

Calkins, Raymond: *The Christian Church in the Modern World.* New York, The Macmillan Company, 1924, 227 pages, price $1.75.

The minister of the First Congregational Church in Cambridge, Massachusetts, has interesting chapters on The Church and Its Critics, Are Churches Necessary, The Mission of the Church. Other chapters are on the more specific functions of teaching, worship, human brotherhood, etc.

The Inquiry: *Why the Church?* Distributed by the Association Press, New York City, 347 Madison Avenue, New York, 1925, 104 pages, price in paper, $.60, in cloth, $.90.

A series of twelve discussion outlines on the specific rôle of the church, illustrated with varied and striking quotations from writers of different schools of thought.

Lindeman, E. C.: *The Community.* New York City, The Association Press, 1921, 314 pages, price $1.60.

This book is an introduction to the study of community leadership and organization. It gives the viewpoint of one whose focus of interest is the welfare of the community rather than of one who is particularly concerned with the practical problem of the church building itself into the life of the community.*

* The point of view of this writer may be gathered from the following comment which he made on this outline:

"This study outline will, obviously, be used by persons whose primary concern is for the Church. To them the Church as an institution stands at

Douglass, H. Paul, *1,000 City Churches.* New York, George H. Doran Company, 1926, 380 pages, price $4.00.

This book represents the type of study carried on under the auspices of the Institute of Social and Religious Research and presents some interesting tables of functional frequency in city churches (Pages 56 *et seq.*).

the center of our social structure. The question, as they ask it, is: 'Are there too many churches in the town, in view of our wish to have the Church dominate our community?' In the same manner, members of the Masonic Order might ask whether or not there were a sufficient number of lodges—sufficient, that is, from the point of view of control.

"On the other hand, if students in sociology classes were to use an outline of this sort, they would be obliged at the outset to reverse its hypothesis; they would begin by regarding all institutions as means toward certain ends; thereupon they would inquire whether or not the functioning of these institutions fulfilled these ends. One of the first inquiries they would make, for example, would be: Does the Church properly coordinate its functions with those of the other organizations and institutions of the community? In other words, from a sociological point of view, an institution does not justify itself by its efficiency alone, that is by its efficiency measured in terms of its own institutionalism; its justification comes in terms of coordinated or integrated efficiency.

"All of this, it seems to me, needs to be said if this inquiry is to maintain something like a balanced position with respect to the totality of life's values. The very enthusiasts for consolidated, amalgamated, or community churches may work toward lowered community effectiveness; indeed, they are sure to bring this result if their eyes are turned institutionward. It seems to me that, unless certain correctives are inserted, this study outline will lead precisely in that direction."

CHAPTER II

How Our Town Came to Have Its Different Churches, and Why Different People Prefer Different Ones

IN her pamphlet, *Our International House,* Miss Rachel Brooks has made a sociological study of the American village of Sayville, Long Island. By careful study of church records, local newspapers, etc., she has given us an intimate and minute picture of the various influences which have reacted on the religious life of that village, famous for its oyster-beds. She shows the results of the various waves of migration—the Dutch, the Bohemians, the Irish, the Jews—upon its church life. She has traced the different situations which confronted the children of the earliest inhabitants down to the time when the Klan was organized. She even shows how revivals broke out in Sayville whenever the economic life of the community was threatened by the depletion of the oyster-beds, and how social discontent was a factor tending to ecclesiastical schism.

Somewhat similar, if briefer, studies have been included by Dr. Brunner in his book on *Village Communities.* The second part of this book contains eight case-studies of individual villages in this

country. Writing of one of these villages, he says:

The first church established was the Episcopal, which was organized in 1794, largely by lawyers and county officials. The congregation built its church, and later rebuilt it, through the aid of lotteries authorized by the state legislature.

The second church, founded in 1802, was the Methodist Episcopal. Its members sought no aid from lotteries; nor had they much wealth. A generation passed before their church was finally completed (from vestibule to window-shades); and by that time it was too small for the congregation.

This church was connected with a large country circuit for almost a century; but the Episcopal Church never established country connections.*

Dr. Brunner goes on to point out that recently a new church has been formed—this time, Methodist Protestant:

The new class consciousness was largely responsible for the founding of a Methodist Protestant church on the north side of the tracks. A description furnished by a charter member of the new church illustrates the attitude of the non-native element:

"The Methodist Episcopal church was run by a clique, mostly lawyers. The working people could go to sermons, but otherwise they took little part and felt no responsibility toward the church. The Methodist Protestant is more democratic and friendly. We had our first meeting in a storehouse. Then we had a revival. Some people from the

* In this connection it may be noted that many students of American Church history give the adaptability of the circuit-riding preacher to a pioneer and frontier civilization as one of the main reasons for the popularity of the Methodist Church in this country.

Methodist Episcopal church joined, but mostly those who had not been members at all."

In less than two years the new church, aided by a liberal subsidy from the home-mission board, had more than a hundred members. Its aggressiveness stirred the Methodist Episcopal church to install a resident minister to uphold its prestige. This is the kind of happening that explains how what is frequently called "overlapping" can come about. . . . The social differences that became institutionalized in the different churches were also responsible for the organization of several new fraternal orders which met the desires of the newer element in the population for some measure of organized social life. (Pages 221, 222.)

Let us now turn to Hometown and see if a study of the history of the community will not illuminate the problem of its different churches. This digression into a study of group- or clique-psychology may prove of fundamental importance.

It would be well to invite to this meeting some resident in the community who is especially familiar with its history, since some of the questions may require an intimate knowledge of backgrounds which the ordinary members of the group may not possess.

1. Here is a list of churches in a town with the dates of their foundation:

Baptist	1743
Congregational	1755
Protestant Episcopal	1798
Roman Catholic	1856
German Lutheran	1880
Lithuanian Lutheran	1902
Roman Catholic (Polish)	1925

Prepare a similar list of the churches in your community, listing them in the order of their foundation, with the dates of their organization. (In cases where a community is so large as to have more than a dozen churches, select the leading seven or eight churches for this study, if this seems desirable.)

2. Churches often owe their inception to causes like these:

a. They were due to the denominational loyalty of the first settlers.

b. They were caused by schisms, due to doctrinal differences or—quite frequently—to differences over persons, *e.g.*, the dismissal of a pastor or an organist.

c. They began as missions founded by a neighboring church and later became self-supporting and perhaps joined the same denomination as the mother church.

d. A home missionary of one of the denominations visited the place and succeeded in interesting a group in organizing a church of that particular denomination.

e. A new racial or national group came into the village or town and did not find themselves at home in the existing churches.

f. A real-estate firm wanted a church for advertising purposes and offered attractive terms to a group or denomination.

What were the main reasons for the formation of each of the churches which you have just listed?

3. Which of these churches are stronger today than they ever were before? Which have grown

weaker? Account if possible for the growth or the decline in each instance.

4. List these again in the order of their present

a. Numerical strength,
b. Financial strength,
c. Social prestige,
d. Doctrinal temper (conservative or liberal),
e. Willingness to cooperate with each other,
f. Alertness to meet social need,
g. Cultivation of personal devotion and fervor,
h. Prevailing political allegiance.

Is the status which you have just assigned to the various churches typical of the denomination-at-large with which it is connected, or is it largely a local characteristic?

5. What were the reasons for your affiliation with the church with which you are at present connected—*e.g.:*

a. Accident of birth,
b. Marriage,
c. Interest in a given clergyman,
d. Doctrinal conviction voluntarily attained,
e. Æsthetic pleasure in a given type of church or form of service,
f. Identification with church of "social set" you go with?
g. Other reasons.

6. If your church were to discontinue in this community, would you feel at home in any of the other churches? Why? Why not? Would you be willing to join any of them? If so, which? (List in

order of preference.) Would you be unwilling to join certain ones? If so, which? Why?

7. Is your allegiance to your own church of such a quality that, should it cease to exist in Hometown, you would endeavor to remove to some place where you could share its privileges?

SUGGESTED READINGS

Brooks, Rachel, *Our International House,* The Religion of An American Town, Sayville, Long Island. The Sayville Press, 1927, 64 pages, price 60 cents.

This study was first printed in the local paper. While the pamphlet is poorly printed, the study itself is an example of what might well be done in almost any town and village in the country. It is doubtful if there is in existence a historical study of a little town which so fully indicates the interconnection of religion with economics, and with race, nationality, and class attitudes. Very valuable and suggestive.

Brunner, E. de S., *Village Communities.* New York, George H. Doran Company, 1927, 244 pages, price $2.25.

The second part of this study, pages 99 to 233, gives case histories of eight typical American villages, showing the rise, decline, or growth of the various village churches in the light of the general village history.

Federal Council of Churches of Christ in America, *Handbook of the Churches.* New York, 1927, 427 pages, price $1.50.

Lyon, William H., *A Study of Christian Sects,* with an introductory chapter on the Jews. Thirteenth edition, revised and enlarged by John Malich, Boston, Beacon Press, 1926, 257 pages, price $2.00.

Phelan, M., *Handbook of All Denominations.* Nashville, Cokesbury Press, 1927, 215 pages, price $1.25.

These three books, *Handbook of the Churches, A Study of Christian Sects,* and *Handbook of All Denominations,* contain in compact form a summary of useful information concerning each of the important sects and denominations. The first is issued by an interdenominational agency, and gives in its Section II, pages 96-198, more information as to present organization and leadership than to history. The second book is issued by the Unitarian headquarters, and the third by a Methodist press.

Bureau of Census, U. S. Department of Commerce, *Religious Bodies,* 1916, U. S. Government Printing Office. Part I, Summary and General Tables, 594 pages; Part II, Separate Denominations, History, Description and Statistics, 727 pages.

Religious Bodies is in two immense volumes, the second of which contains statistics for each denomination in 1916, with a prefatory and impartial note stating something of the tenets, history, and distinctive practises of each of the groups. The report of the census for 1926 should supersede these volumes.

Brown, William Adams, *Imperialistic Religion and the Religion of Democracy,* A Study in Social Psychology. Hodder, Stoughton Company, London, 227 pages, price 7s. 6d. [American edition out of print.]

Lake, Kirsopp, *The Religion of Yesterday and Tomorrow.* Boston, Houghton Mifflin Company, 1925, 179 pages, price $2.00.

McComas, Henry C., *The Psychology of Religious Sects.* New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1912, 285 pages, price $1.25.

These three books approach the question of the differences of the sects less from the historical and doctrinal points of view than from the psychological, and discuss the temperamental differences between the various religious groups.

Professor Brown argues that the three fundamental religious types are the imperialistic, the individualistic, and the democratic. Dr. Lake believes that Protestants are either Fundamentalists, Experimentalists, or Institutionalists. Both of these classifications are tidy but may be too simple and arbitrary to be exact. But the books are most suggestive and readable. Professor McComas was a pioneer in this field, and his book should possibly be revised in the light of further study, as some of the statements may be somewhat doctrinaire.

Travers, Libbie Miller, *Sectarian Shackles.* New York, The Macmillan Company, 1925, 149 pages, price $1.50.

This is the story of the religious readjustment of one brought up in a small and isolated village in a northeastern county of Missouri. She ardently believed that her church alone had *The Truth,* and only later came into contact with other forms of the faith which made equal claims to validity.

CHAPTER III

Can Our Town's Needs Be Met by Cooperation of the Churches?

NO one can appreciate the present tendencies in American Protestantism without some knowledge of the extensive development of local cooperation between the various churches and ministers in the last forty years. In some communities the organizing agency for such cooperation is the Pastors' Union; in others, a local Council or Federation of Churches with or without employed executives; in still others, the initiative is taken by an interchurch men's organization or a Federation of Women's Church Societies; in some cases, the nucleus is a local Sunday School Association or Council of Religious Education, or a Local Union of Christian Endeavor. More recently, there has developed in the more rural districts what is called the "larger parish," a method of organization concerning which there is as yet too little authentic information.

A study of the work of the various interchurch organizations reveals a variety of characteristic activities. A very common form of cooperation has been the holding of union services, especially during the Week of Prayer, Lent, the summer months and at

Thanksgiving time. Revival services and a visitation evangelism campaign based on an interchurch religious census are also frequently conducted by a group of churches working together. During the coal shortage at the time of the Great War, many churches were forced to bring their congregations together, and in some cases these experiences proved so profitable that the temporary merger became permanent. In other cases, however, the attempted cooperation may have made patent temperamental differences and led to a fresh emphasis on denominationalism.

Another common form of cooperation has been in the work of training teachers for the Church School through Community Interdenominational Sunday School Teachers' Associations or Training Institutes. In Malden, Massachusetts, an interesting community-wide experiment in week-day religious education was made possible through interchurch cooperation.

Perhaps the most common form of joint activity has been that of safeguarding community morals along lines generally approved by the churches. Thus, pastors' unions have been energetic in protesting against the violation of liquor laws, gambling ordinances, Sunday laws, etc. In certain communities, some of these activities have not received the complete endorsement of all the members of the constituent churches.

In one Illinois town, three churches (Methodist, Disciples, and Presbyterian) maintain their separate identity and worship apart, but have united their Sunday Schools and their Young People's Societies. In Jamaica Plain, Massachusetts, the various churches for some time supported in common a parish visitor who called on all the people of the community. In another town the churches organized an Interchurch Forum.

Our problem in this discussion is to consider how far the church problem in Hometown may be met by retaining the different churches as they are, but finding an ever-widening area of cooperation. For those who care to consider the possibility of the larger parish, attention is directed to the suggested constitutions both for a larger parish and a local council of churches which may be found in Appendices B and C, pages 89 to 96.

1. Here are a few things which local churches have done in cooperation with one another:

i. Interdenominational Sunday School Teachers' Association, or Training Institute.
ii. Daily Vacation Bible School.
iii. Midweek Community School of Religion for Adults.
iv. Boy and Girl Scout Activities.
v. Common Church Building used by different churches.
vi. Union Meetings—
   (a) Week of Prayer,
   (b) Summer Vacation,

(c) Lenten Season,
(d) Thanksgiving Service.
vii. Revivals.
viii. United Men's and Women's Clubs.

Of what similar cooperative enterprises of churches in Hometown or elsewhere have you knowledge? Add these to the list above.

2. In what enterprises, if in any, have the churches or any group of churches in Hometown actually cooperated? List these.

a. Which of the churches withheld cooperation in these enterprises? Why?

b. Which of the cooperating churches were but languid in their support? Why?

c. Was the cooperation sufficiently successful to be permanent? If not, why did it cease?

d. Which of these enterprises has secured the support of the rank and file of the members of the cooperating churches?

e. Has such cooperation made for good feeling between the churches and led to better understanding?

3. In what enterprises has cooperation between two or more churches been sought, but without success? List these.

a. What reasons have been commonly attributed to the failure of these efforts?

b. Would a new effort in that enterprise be more successful if tried again today under present conditions? Why? Why not?

4. In the light of 2 and 3,

a. Do you feel that the churches of your community are acting as if they were conscious of a definite responsibility to the entire community? What makes you think as you do?

b. Do you feel that these churches are, in any large degree and in any deep sense, moulding and transforming the social life of the members of the entire community, providing them with the aids to the most abundant life, irrespective of age, sex, race, nationality, social status? What evidence could you present in support of your position?

5. In what further types of enterprise (see again list under 1), not before attempted by the churches of Hometown, might they profitably try to cooperate?

6. Examine all the enterprises mentioned under 2, 3, and 5.

a. In what enterprises on this list would all the churches probably cooperate?

b. In what enterprises on this list would some of the churches withhold cooperation? Which churches? What makes you think so?

7. Sometimes churches fail to cooperate because of some of the following conditions:

i. The people in certain churches, coming from a particular racial or national group, or social class, do not have much in common;

ii. The kind of worship and religious exercise which appeals to one group does not appeal to the other;

iii. Some churches encourage lively expressions of emotions; others urge restraint;

iv. Some churches' views about God and salvation are quite unacceptable to others;

v. Sometimes cooperation is subtly used as a means of making proselytes;

vi. Sometimes participation in interdenominational work cools the interest of persons in the work of specific churches, and is therefore feared by the churches as likely to draw away their working force;

vii. Local cooperation is often discouraged by the official action or attitude of the denominational group, national or universal, with which the church is affiliated.

a. What other conditions (see answers to question 6b) may prevent any large cooperation between the several churches in Hometown?

b. Which of these conditions would tend to be materially altered if some of the churches were actually united?

c. Which of these conditions would probably remain to be reckoned with even if the churches were actually united?

8. Which group or groups of churches in Hometown might therefore be expected to participate in a union movement of any kind? Which would probably not participate? Why?

SUGGESTED READINGS

Guild, Roy B., *Practising Christian Unity.* New York, Association Press, 1919, 85 pages, price 75 cents.

Guild, Roy B., *Community Programs for Cooperating Churches.* New York, Association Press, 1920, 253 pages, price $1.00.

Dr. Guild was for ten years secretary of the Commission on Councils of Churches of the Federal Council and an ardent promoter of local federations of churches. Many of the leading city federations today trace their origin to his work. These books, however, are somewhat old, and the program of the local federation has evolved a good deal since they were published.

Moore, John M., "A Formula for Church Union," an article published in the *Christian Union Quarterly* (for April, 1928).

Reprints may be obtained by application to the Federal Council of Churches. Dr. Moore, who is on the staff of the Federal Council of Churches, expounds the theory of ecclesiastical federalism and interchurch cooperation in certain specified ways as a more fruitful method toward unity than one involving the surrender of denominational identity and tradition.

The Institute of Social and Religious Research.

370 Seventh Avenue, New York, is at the present time making a scientific study of Federations of Churches in approximately twenty localities. The results of this study are to be published in the near future and should provide unusual data relative to various cooperative programs in the cities covered.

CHAPTER IV

Is Church Union in Our Town Desirable or Undesirable?

WHILE this outline was being planned, the Inquiry received some interesting letters from correspondents and critics which may suggest a possible approach to our next problem: Is cooperation in certain enterprises between the local churches sufficient, or should more definite steps toward some measure of organic unity be made?

One writer asked for help in a mid-western village of one thousand inhabitants where there were six churches. He said, "No two of them will cooperate in anything." But may it not be that the desperate competition in this particular place made cooperation impossible? It may be much easier for large churches, economically and socially secure, than for small and struggling churches with mere handfuls of adherents, to risk cooperation. As a result of some scheme of united work innocently launched, the adherents of the smaller church may easily find their way into an adjoining sheepfold. Where competition is bitter, cooperation may seem suicidal. Here stern conditions may demand a stern remedy, and only some closer form of unity

may make possible a sane *modus vivendi* for the churches.

But there is much to think about in another communication received from a correspondent, who is the editor of a Southern paper. He had been asked to criticize the first draft of this outline, and he wrote:

The multiplicity of Protestant denominations appears to thoughtful people stupid and destructive of religious progress. Given the power to deal autocratically with this situation, few of us would resist the temptation to scrap all but three or four of them and combine all the old groups under the few institutions that passed our censorship. I am glad no one has this dictatorship. Whatever one might wish to be the tendency, the drift of things, in matters of Church as well as all else, is toward individualism in the sense that individual self-expression is several hundred per cent. more assertive today than it was a century ago. . . .

In every phase of life there is rapid increase in the division of labor—and of play, worship, etc. There must be a large enough number of groups and divisions to satisfy aspiring presidents, secretaries, sachems, exalted rulers, worthy matrons, etc., etc., etc. Timid people are lost in a large church but may be people of authority in a little one. In imagination one may continue the process of subdivision in the many fields until every individual has acquired royalty and is independent of all groups, church, social, politic, etc. If this self-expression, this personal independence, is achieved through self-mastery the union of "all for one and one for all" will have been reached. I suppose that such a goal in which each individual is ruler, legislator, and judge is anarchy—a social order to which my mind has never assented —though when men and women become considerate and tol-

erant enough to unify their churches they will probably be worthy of being trusted to govern themselves. . . .

Many little churches produce more leaders than one big church. It may be added that many little criminal gangs produce more crook leaders than one big gang can produce; and that one big industrial corporation produces fewer leaders than a large number of little corporations can produce.

Science has made vast progress since the days of Herbert Spencer, and the comprehensive philosophy he worked out needs considerable revision; but it seems to be doubtful if any mind of any age that gave full and free expression covering practically every field of human thought was more closely allied with the future than was that of Spencer. Certainly in so far as I am able to discern, social evolution, progress, or whatever one wishes to call the changes human institutions are undergoing, still tends toward heterogeneity.

Many illustrations of the tendencies of churches to still further subdivide might be given out of my own experiences. Here is one that has occurred within the past three years. A small struggling church in this state developed dissension over some trivial matters of a personal nature. Approximately one-half of the membership withdrew, rented a building several miles away in which to hold services on Sundays, made big plans for a new $30,000 church home, and established as many leaders within its fold as there had been in the larger, parent group. There may not be more than twenty-five active members in the swarming colony but there is leadership in singing (and its subdivisions) in the Sunday School, the special programs, etc. . . . Further details might be given to show how the division has increased the opportunity for self-expression and how this opportunity was seized by the membership. . . .

Lest I be misunderstood, let me add that along with the increasing heterogeneity there seems to be increasing unity

—less formal or dogmatic unity but more intrinsic union of spirit. Self-expression means personal experience and that alone is truly educative; and as real education increases social, religious, industrial and political unity becomes increasingly possible.

The writer asks us not to regard the views he has expressed as at all final, but they are of interest as indicating certain possible values in retaining a variety of churches in a given community which those who participate in this discussion may well take into consideration.

1. It has been indicated in the previous discussion that a certain group (or groups) of churches (*name them*) might, if they were approached in the right way, consider steps toward union. After selecting that group which would probably contain the church with which you are identified, consider this question: Which of the churches in your group would have to be satisfied on each of the following grounds?

a. Assent of denominational group with which affiliated and release from any financial obligation to the same.

b. Maintenance of certain definite standards and types of worship and ritual.

c. Probable use of their own church plant.

d. Adequate provision for existing minister or ministers.

e. Preservation of name of the church in the name of the united church.

f. Safeguarding of superior financial assets or meeting of debts and mortgages.

g. Provision for continued contributions to the benevolent funds of the denominations with which affiliated.

h. Adherence to a large measure of theological conservatism or liberalism.

i. Allowance for freedom in sacramental forms, *e.g.*, baptism, Lord's Supper.

j. Changes in original charters, where incorporated, permitting such alterations.

k. Opportunity for withdrawal from merger with unimpaired good standing should the merger not work satisfactorily.

l. Safeguarding of memorials—stained glass windows, etc., or preservation of burial-grounds in perpetuity.

m. Proper legal adjustments relative to invested funds.

n. A clearly stated purpose as a rallying watchword.

2. On what other points, not listed above, would certain churches have to be assured?

3. On which of the points listed in 1 and 2 would it be quite simple to provide such assurance? On which of the points would it be most difficult to provide such assurances?

4. In which of the religious groups would sentiment (devotion to a particular building and the memories associated with it, or to their traditional position in the early life of the community) present a grave obstacle? How widespread is such sentiment in the group? How if at all could it be merged into devotion to the united church?

5. Which, if any, of the churches whose union is proposed are recruited from groups much alike—

a. Racially or nationally,
b. Socially,
c. Temperamentally,
d. In other ways?

In which of these respects are the groups different? Would such difference as may exist make against a successful merger?

6. Which would each of the churches probably be able to contribute to such a merger, by way of

a. Property values,
b. Numbers of adherents,
c. Leadership,
d. Enthusiasm,
e. Leavening influence of ideas,
f. In other ways?

7. What residents in Hometown known to you as

a. affiliated with certain local churches but inactive in them,

b. not connected with any local churches,

would be likely to become more active and interested in church work if a union of churches were effected?

8. Sometimes when union is effected, persons formerly active or prominent in the work of individual churches lose their interest and devotion for some such reasons as these:

i. They feel too deeply a primary loyalty to their own denomination,

ii. They might not be entrusted with such important offices in a united church,

iii. They might feel that they would not be so much needed nor so useful in a united church,

iv. They could not feel at home under the new conditions.

a. Do you know of any persons whose interest and activity in the work of the local churches might, for one of the reasons just listed, cease if a united church was effected?

b. Do you know of any persons whose interest and activity in the work of the local churches might cease, for reasons *other than those just listed,* if a united church was effected?

9. Would you, yourself, in all probability be more active or less active if a united church were effected than you are under the present conditions?

10. In the light of the above discussion, do you feel that the advantages of a united church would outweigh its disadvantages, or the disadvantages outweigh its advantages?

SUGGESTED READINGS

Athearn, Clarence R., *Interchurch Government.* New York, The Century Company, 1925, 377 pages, price $3.00.

One of the most thorough studies of the whole problem of Christian unity, especially on its politico-philosophical side. The Chapters on Regionalism, pages

80-106, and on Federation, pages 203-233, are peculiarly germane to our discussion.

McComas, Henry C., *The Psychology of Religious Sects.* New York, Fleming H. Revell Company, 1912, 285 pages, price $1.25.

This book has already been recommended under Discussion II. In Chapter XII, pages 202-216, the author considers some of the "levelling forces" such as the public school, trade unions, fraternal orders, public libraries, etc., which are "breaking down sectarian barriers."

Zumbrunnen, Albert Clay, *The Community Church.* Chicago, University of Chicago, 1922, 169 pages, price $1.50.

An interesting sociological study, based upon less factual and first-hand material, perhaps, than Miss Hooker's book on *United Churches,* but none the less interesting and suggestive. The author's final thesis is that "the method and basis of unity found in the community church are a probable method and basis for denominational unity."

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

PART TWO

What Denominational Affiliations, if Any, Should a United Church in Our Town Have?

CHAPTER I

What Advantages, If Any, Are Secured for a Local Church by Its Denominational Affiliation?

A Typical Point of View

THE establishment of non-denominational churches we consider an utterly mistaken policy. As a rule, a non-denominational church fails to develop a vigorous and complete Christian life. It is difficult for such a church to find the right kind of pastor. A clergyman who becomes the pastor of a non-denominational church, unlike the pastor of a federated church, practically cuts loose from the fellowship of the denomination with which he was formerly related. This condition makes it difficult for such a church to secure satisfactory pastoral service. A non-denominational church usually bears no part in the work of the great missionary and philanthropic organizations of Christendom, which are making the influence of the churches of Christian lands felt all over the world. A church whose horizon is limited by the boundaries of its own village, and which has no share in the great missionary activities which link the members of denominational churches in fellowship with the life of every zone of the earth and every race of mankind, can have but a maimed and stunted Christian life.

—Report of the Committee on Interdenominational Comity of the Connecticut Federation of Churches.

1. Local churches, by reason of their denominational connections, are sometimes helped in the following ways:

i. They are helped to find easily a ministry trained for the work, and whose fitness, both as to character and education, is guaranteed by the denomination.

ii. Denominations provide various funds for retirement of such ministers on a stated annuity, thus removing from them the paralyzing fears of approaching age which often render their work less efficient.

iii. When local churches are weak and non-sustaining, denominations give them missionary assistance.

iv. When local churches are planning to build a new church or parish-house, the denomination will often assist with grants or loans on special terms.

v. In case of disasters (fire, cyclone, etc.) the denomination will come to the aid of the church which has suffered.

vi. Denominations provide a general oversight and bring a disinterested judgment in times of dissension and necessary discipline in a local church.

vii. Denominations offer tested and standardized programs, especially usable where churches might not have the leadership to evolve their own.

viii. Denominations provide the media for the contribution of benevolent funds with the opportunity of a measurable control over the same through representation in conference, assemblies, synods, etc.

ix. Denominations provide for fellowship with groups and the sharing of experience outside the community, as in state and national conferences, denominational papers, etc. Through missions, denominations cultivate the international outlook.

x. Denominations enrich the local churches with their distinctive traditions.

xi. Denominations safeguard the local church against an indifference to religious truth.

xii. Denominations encourage a local group to greater activity and zeal.

a. In what other ways do the denominations help their local units?

b. In which of these ways has each of the denominations represented in Hometown actually helped the *local* churches affiliated with them?

c. In which of the ways mentioned above have the denominations failed to render efficient help to the local churches in Hometown? Was the fault due to the denominations? [Lack of interest, inefficient supervisors, inability to sense local conditions, etc.] Was the fault due to the local church? [Failure to send delegates, to hear reports from conferences, to pay dues, to invest much in denomination.] To the local minister? [With ministerial standing in another group and hence uninterested.] To the local congregation? [Through being out of sympathy—theologically or otherwise—with prevailing tendencies of denominational leaders, etc.]

2. What, then, have been the advantages, if any, of denominational affiliations to the churches in Hometown? Which of the denominations have been of the greatest real assistance to their Hometown churches?

3. Some undenominational churches claim that important advantages as have just been mentioned can be secured by them without definite affiliation with a denomination, thus:

i. Most of the standardized programs, prepared by denominations, are usually published and available for their

use as well as for the denominational churches if they wish to use them. Meanwhile, they are under no compulsion to use them.

ii. They can send fraternal delegates to various national welfare bodies working for the general improvement of human life, and secure fellowship in this way.

iii. They can set aside a fixed percentage (*e.g.,* 10 per cent.) of the total income of the church to be used by inter-denominational or non-sectarian groups like the Federal Council of Churches, the Home Missions Council, American Sunday School Union, American Bible Society, Mission to Lepers, Y. M. C. A., Y. W. C. A., International Council of Religious Education.

iv. Such religious truths as seem to the local group fundamental can be included in the membership basis of the local church.

v. Workers in undenominational churches have their own fraternal organizations which prove mutually helpful and inspiring.

a. In what other ways do undenominational churches secure some of the advantages usually claimed for denominational churches, and which would be desired by a united church in Hometown?

b. In actual practice, what undenominational churches known to you, or concerning which you may have read, avail themselves of the opportunities of securing similar advantages? If so, which advantages? If not, why not?

c. To what extent, if at all, do the undenominational churches seek to profit by the advantages provided by the different denominations without themselves bearing any definite responsibility for the same?

d. What advantages can be sought by the undenominational church only at the grave risk of becoming itself another denomination?

4. Which of the advantages, if any, usually attributed to the denominational churches (see list under question 1) are peculiar to them and not usually available to undenominational groups? How important are these for Hometown?

SUGGESTED READINGS

Brown, William Adams, *The Church in America.* New York, Macmillan Company, 1922, 378 pages, price $2.00.

Especially the chapter on The Church in the Community, pages 205-213. This particular section describes in general the movements for the community church, its status, and possible lines of future development, the three forms of the community church.

Brunner, E. de S., *Churches of Distinction in Town and Country.* New York, George H. Doran Company, 1923, 198 pages, price $1.50.

Chapters II, III, X, and XIII describe united churches connected with denominations.

Brunner, E. de S., *Village Communities.* New York, George H. Doran Company, 1927, 220 pages, price $2.25.

Chapter VI, pages 69-83, contains a brief statement of religious conditions in the American village, together with comments on certain characteristics of united churches.

Holmes, John Haynes, *New Churches for Old; A Plea for Community Religion.* New York,

Dodd, Mead and Company, 1922, 341 pages, price $2.00. (The book is now out of print.)

Holmes, John Haynes, "Do Denominations Hinder or Help?" An article in *The Christian Century,* August 9, 1928.

The above mentioned book and article are a vigorous arraignment of denominationalism in general. The writer argues that denominationalism is not the fruit of liberty but the spawn of tyranny—that its bulwarks are pride, prejudice, and pelf.

Hooker, Elizabeth R., *United Churches.* New York, George H. Doran Company, 1926, 306 pages, price $2.75.

An account of four types of united church, with a discussion of their problems and adjustment to them, based on an extensive survey under the auspices of the Institute of Social and Religious Research. The most scientific study of the subject available at the present time, and an indispensable reference book for those studying the problems covered in this section of the discussion.

Piper, David R., *Community Churches.* Willett, Clark and Colby, 440 South Dearborn Street, Chicago, 158 pages, price $1.50, paper $1.00.

The book has a definite bias in favor of independent community churches and against denominationalism of all kinds. Nevertheless, it represents what is probably the most authentic statement of the champions of the undenominational church.

CHAPTER II

What Advantages, If Any, Has the Undenominational Church Over a Church with Denominational Affiliation or Affiliations?

A Typical Point of View

AN independent community church is a church which is organized entirely without organic connection with the denominational system. It secures its pastors, directs its activities and administers its property entirely on its own responsibility. However, it may be, and usually is, cooperative with missions, education and benevolence as administered by the existing boards of the denominations or by accredited interdenominational agencies. Rejecting all outside authority, it does not reject the idea of fellowship with other churches and Christian movements.

A community church gets its pastors wherever it wishes. A service bureau is maintained by the community church workers, which regularly lists scores of high-grade ministers willing to accept a community church. There are more ministers than there are churches to serve.

These ministers maintain ministerial standing mostly by remaining in the denomination where they were when called. Practically every one of the larger denominations permits this. They may go back to the service of a denominational church without odium.

Nearly all of the community churches contribute to missions and carry on missionary education on the plan provided by the Missionary Education Movement of the American churches. To the charge that they are not as missionary

as denominational churches, it may be replied, they do not need to be. They eliminate the need of much of the home mission money formerly used in grants to maintain competitive churches. There are community churches in America which give as much to missions as to local expenses. In the long run the elimination of church competition should release more money for missions.

Community churches are not so often revivalistic as the older type of church. But in their ability to recruit new members, they have proven the superiority of the new church over the old. An Iowa village had 75 church members in three competitive churches. But after a month of the community church, it had 192 members in one church."

—From the *Community Churchman* (abridged), January, 1928.

1. Certain local churches which have no denominational affiliation of any kind claim that they gain thereby such advantages as the following:

i. They are able to shape their local program with an undivided attention to the needs of the community as a whole.

ii. They are able to modify denominational strife and avoid duplication.

iii. They feel under no pressure to contribute to the denominational causes in which the community has no substantial interest, but are able to make such contributions as they desire and where they wish.

iv. They make a greater appeal to business men who are "fed up" with denominational bickerings.

v. They are able to stimulate a religious interest in those who would never be attracted by any of the stereotyped denominational appeals.

vi. They are free from the incubus of certain denominational traditions, in creed, temperament, aversion to innocent amusements, etc.

vii. Communities do not want standardized programs. They want to work out their own program.

viii. They are drawing to themselves some of the most progressive ministers from all the denominations who are eager to be free from the restrictions of denominationalism.

ix. They are the only churches which would be adequately supported or welcomed in many communities.

x. They are able to lead the entire community in neighborhood service.

What other advantages have you heard claimed for the undenominational church? Add these to the list.

2. Which of these advantages are not peculiar to undenominational churches but may also be enjoyed by a church with definite denominational affiliation or affiliations?

3. Which, if any, of these advantages, not peculiar to the undenominational church but equally possible to the denominational church, are more easily possible in certain denominations than in others? If so, which denominations?

4. Which, if any, of these advantages, not peculiar to the undenominational church but also equally possible to the denominational church, are, nevertheless, rarely found in the actual work of denominational churches? Why?

5. Which, if any, of these advantages theoretically claimed by the undenominational church are, nevertheless, rarely found in the actual working out of their own programs? What evidence have you for each of your specific statements:

i. Out of your own knowledge of undenominational churches?

ii. Out of what you may have read or heard?

6. Which of the advantages claimed by the undenominational church, are contingent upon cooperation with groups created or largely supported by denominations?

7. What actual advantages, therefore, claimed by the undenominational church, are

i. Rarely found in the denominational church? [Cf. question 4 above.]

ii. Peculiar to the undenominational church?

8. List again the advantages possible in

a. the denominational church (cf. answers to preceding discussion, question 4),

b. the undenominational church (cf. answers to question 7 above).

Check whichever of the advantages would be most necessary or desirable in any united church, such as might be created in Hometown.

9. In the light of this, do you feel that so far as a possible union of churches in Hometown is con-

cerned, the advantages of a denominational affiliation would be greater [or less] than the advantages gained when there is no denominational affiliation? Why do you think as you do?

If the answer is "greater" some groups may prefer to proceed directly to Part III. It will be well, however, if they first examine the various adjustments suggested in the following two discussions.

CHAPTER III

Shall the Proposed United Church Have Several Denominational Affiliations?

IN the cantonal city of Glarus, Switzerland, one may discover a church edifice which for more than a hundred years has been used by both Roman Catholics and Protestants. It is in truth the religious center of the community. The Catholic element of the population gather together early on Sunday morning for the sacrifice of the Mass. When their service is completed, a curtain is drawn before the high altar, shutting out the sanctuary, and other readjustments are speedily made which convert the building into a fitting place for a Protestant service.

Here we have an example of two religious groups, perhaps fundamentally different in their philosophy and temperament, finding it possible, however, to use the same building.

A somewhat similar situation has been created in some of the military posts in our own country where it is advisable for the soldiers to use the same building for religious services. Occasional experiments in architecture are being made, the use of reversible seats making it possible for the Catholic chaplain to conduct Mass appropriately when the seats face

one direction while the Protestant chaplain can later conduct his service from a Protestant chancel when the seats face the other way.

Experiments of this character have, however, been rare in American life, although they have sometimes been made to meet a temporary emergency. It may be, however, that in many communities the same building could be used by different congregations belonging to different denominations and under different pastoral oversight. Thus, in Ohio, there are several instances in which Lutheran and Reformed churches own a building jointly, alternating the use of it weekly.

1 2 3 7 7

It has been found, however, quite possible in many communities, for the various churches to unite their congregations under the same pastor while they preserve their individual identities. A church formed by such a union is called a "federated" church, which has been thus defined:

> A federated church is a combination of two or more congregations under one pastoral leadership for worship and for work. New members uniting with a federated church usually unite with one or another of the constituent churches, though often a general membership is offered to those unwilling to join any of the constituent denominations. A federated church is represented in all the higher courts of the constituent denominations.

There are probably several hundred such churches in the country. In 1924 there were 312 such churches in communities of less than 2,500

population. The champions of the Federated Church argue that it is frequently much better to unite churches in this manner than to merge the various constituent units into one irrevocable unity.*

Our problem in this discussion will be to discover whether the situation in Hometown is such that any merger which might be effected there should be along the lines of a federated church or should involve a more complete and thorough organic unity.

1. Certain churches considering union have been led to adopt federation for one or more of the following reasons:

i. It was easier to get certain of the participating churches to consent to union if their existing denominational tie was not to be broken.

ii. Certain denominations would be more willing to give their assent to the union if the denominational tie remained. (This might be particularly true if the church were comparatively weak.)

iii. The weaker churches did not feel that they were being completely absorbed in the new organization.

iv. The regular gifts of the churches to their respective missionary boards were continued—thus causing no financial losses to the national work.

v. If the union did not seem to work satisfactorily, either group could withdraw much more easily and continue as before, with no necessary loss of property or prestige.

a. What other possible advantages might there be in such a plan of federation?

* Some facetious critics of the Federated Church have described it as a "companionate marriage."

b. Which of these reasons might be important factors in the problem of uniting the particular churches under consideration?

2. Certain churches which have tried this method of federation have found that:

i. The interest of the church was divided, and this made more difficult the creation of a real unity within the local church.

ii. The actual transaction of business was complicated at almost every point, *e.g.,* on all joint boards care must be taken to include representatives from each of the groups rather than choosing men on their personal merits; certain funds must be kept carefully separated; the churches must send delegates to the conferences of all the denominations concerned; ministers must be selected in turn from various denominations.

iii. The possibility of the withdrawal of one or more of the participating churches made against permanence and prevented a greater appeal to the "sense of adventure."

iv. In case of actual withdrawal, it was difficult to make a satisfactory adjustment in regard to the division of assets, *e.g.,* improvements to church property held in common.

v. Denominational leaders who for any reason became dissatisfied with the progress of the church, or the share of benevolences received by them, might urge the termination of the federation, even though the members themselves seemed reasonably satisfied.

a. What other disadvantages might seem to be inherent in a federated church while the federation was in force? In case one or more of the churches should withdraw?

b. Which of these might be particularly felt if the churches in Hometown amalgamated in this way?

3. Compare now the advantages which might accrue to a union of churches on a basis of "Federation" with the disadvantages of such a scheme. Are the advantages, so far as your own community and this particular union are concerned, greater or less than the disadvantages? What makes you think as you do?

If the answer here is "greater," the discussion may end here; still, the remaining questions may well be considered.

4. A church may have several denominational connections, but the corporation is one and acts as a unit. This is the case with the People's Church, East Lansing, Michigan, where four denominations —Baptist, Congregational, Methodist, and Presbyterian—have contributed equally to the building of the church and are definitely represented on the governing board of the church. The pastor thus describes the direct connection of these denominations:

i. Each of the cooperating denominations holds a lien on the church property, to be foreclosed should the property ever cease to be used for church purposes.

ii. Each of the "Big 4" elects a trustee to represent it on the board of Trustees. Thus there are four denominational trustees out of the board of ten. The other six are elected by the local church.

iii. Each of the "Big 4" is paying the same amount on the building fund ($25,000).

iv. The benevolences are divided equally among the four.

v. The report of the church is printed in the minutes of each.

vi. In the call of the pastor, the constitution provides that he shall be nominated by the joint boards of elders and trustees and elected by the church, thus giving each of the denominations through its trustee a voice in the choice of the pastor.

vii. The control of the student work is under a joint committee consisting of four local men, four men chosen from the four denominations in that state, and four national secretaries.

While the presence of the State Agricultural College at East Lansing made this cooperative "interdenominational" church seem desirable, there may be other communities without a student constituency where a similar scheme might be appropriately developed.

a. Are there certain distinctive conditions in Hometown which would make an "interdenominational" church such as that in East Lansing peculiarly adapted to local conditions?

b. Should such a church be deemed practicable, what share should each of the constituent denominations be given

i. In the control of the policy of the church?

ii. In the allotment of money received for benevolences?

iii. In the selection of the pastor?

iv. In other matters?

In which of these matters would adjustment be particularly difficult? Why?

c. 1. Should such a church be formed, what difficulties due to its interdenominational character might still confront those who sought to administer it?

2. Would such difficulties, if any, be greater or less than those connected with the administration of a one-denominational church?

d. Would the constituent denominations be willing to effect such an interdenominational church? Why? Why not?

e. Should our proposed united church in Hometown be an interdenominational church or not?

If the answer is in the affirmative, the discussion may end at this point. Still, the remaining questions may well be considered.

CHAPTER IV

What Particular Denominations Are Most Desirable for the Proposed United Church in Our Town?

1. If the proposed united church were to seek affiliation with some particular denomination, some denominations might be particularly desired:

i. because the churches proposing church union would be already affiliated with them,

ii. because their consent would be necessary to whatever scheme was finally adopted,

iii. because they are equipped to give the large measure of help and supervision which would be needed,

iv. because they allow for the largest measure of freedom in the local church,

v. because they would be favorably received by the majority of the persons in the churches actually proposing to unite,

vi. because they would be most welcome and approved by the majority of the persons in the community, including the unchurched.

What other reasons, if any, might determine the selection of that particular denomination?

2. Arrange these reasons in the order of the

greatest consideration which, in your opinion, they deserve.

3. List now, under each of the various reasons or categories given above, and in the order which you have just assigned to them in 2, the various denominations with which the united church might possibly be affiliated. Thus, if the two churches proposing union were a Baptist and a Methodist church, put the names of those two denominations under category 1 : i, given above. Do this under each of the categories.

a. Which of the denominations appears least often in these various categories? Which appear most often?

b. Which of them appear under the categories deemed most significant, as is 2? Which do not appear in those categories at all?

4. In the light of the discussion above, which denomination would, on most points and in your opinion, meet most effectively the needs and requirements of the proposed united church?

DISCUSSION OUTLINE

PART THREE

What Preliminary Steps Must Necessarily Precede the Consummation of Union?

CHAPTER I

Sounding Public Opinion

1. In making this study it is necessary to remember that there are at least three groups whose wishes should in some instances be considered before church union is consummated.

i. The membership and adherents of the churches most concerned.

ii. The members of the community at large.

iii. The denominational officials whose consent and cooperation will be desirable, if not absolutely necessary.

a. Which if any of these three groups mentioned should we consult first? Why?

b. Should our effort at this time be to make a thorough sounding of public opinion, or should we rather seek a "sampling" of opinion in certain smaller circles? However we decide, how can we be sure that the opinions we seek are fairly representative of the mind of the group concerned?

2. On what exact points are we most anxious to get the opinion of those whom we intend to consult? (In this connection, the suggested questionnaire in Appendix A may be found stimulating. Perhaps, indeed, the group may draw up its own questionnaire to be presented to members of each of the three groups mentioned in 1, even though the questionnaire method itself is not ultimately used.)

3. Here are some ways of discovering public opinion:

i. Provide for a general hearing on the matter.

ii. Call an official meeting and submit the matter to a vote.

iii. Make a personal canvass of those whose opinion is sought.

iv. Send out a letter, inviting written expressions of opinion on certain stated questions.

v. Distribute a general questionnaire to be filled in by those who receive it.

vi. Discuss the matter through the local press.

a. What other methods than those just listed are there for discovering public opinion? Add such to the list.

b. Which of these methods, or which combination of methods, would best serve our immediate purposes?

4. What persons shall have the particular responsibility for making this investigation into existing public opinion?

5. By what date should this preliminary investigation be completed, and the report on it be ready for submission to this group?

6. When, then, shall we meet again to hear these reports?

SUGGESTED READINGS

Hooker, Elizabeth R., *How Can Local Churches Come Together?* A Handbook of Principles and Methods. New York, Committee on Comity and Cooperation, Home Missions Council, price $.25.

CHAPTER II

What Further Steps Are Necessary Before Concrete Proposals Looking for Union Are Made?

This discussion should not be held until the committee appointed at the last session is ready to report.

1. What are the general findings of the committee appointed at the last meeting?

2. In the light of these findings, what persons or groups seem on the whole averse to church union of the kind proposed?

3. Is the opposition so great as to render any further steps on the part of the Joint Committee inadvisable? If so, shall we so report to our respective boards?

If the answer is in the affirmative, the discussion ends here. If in the negative, the group may address itself to the next questions.

4. In some cases, the following methods may be found useful in the further education of the community where some of the opposition seems to be based on an inadequate knowledge of the facts in the situation:

i. Holding of public meetings with addresses by outstanding churchmen, including denominational executives,

representatives of local federations, pastors of federated or community churches, etc.

ii. Articles furnished to local papers, giving news of united churches.

iii. Calling a meeting or meetings of those opposed to union, with a view to seeking from them a list of the questions which particularly trouble them and which might be presented to the proponents of union.

iv. Personal conferences between such individuals or groups and representatives of the commission.

v. Decision to experiment in certain forms of united activities with a view to discovering the possibilities of a more organic union.

a. Which of these steps might only alienate still further or increase the opposition of those opposed to union?

b. Which of these or similar steps would probably reduce the opposition?

5. Should further proceedings be delayed until another effort is made in the interest of unanimous action, or would the possible gains in such a delay be more than offset by the losses which would probably ensue?

A.

(*If a delay is deemed advisable*)

6. Shall we appoint a committee to arrange for such measures, and to call this commission together again if and when it shall deem it expedient?

7. If so, who shall constitute this committee?

B.

(*If a delay is deemed inadvisable*)

6. How shall we arrange for the preparation of a draft scheme of union, providing for the suggested changes (if any) in state charters, denominational affiliations, by-laws, formation of new corporations, disposition of property and vested funds, arrangements for ministers, etc? *

7. To whom should such a draft scheme be submitted for further criticism before referring it to the churches we represent—officials and members of church organizations, local and influential citizens, lawyers, students of united churches, responsible denominational or interdenominational authorities, etc.?

8. When shall we meet to consider such a draft scheme?

* Certain "model" by-laws for united churches of any kind are provided in the manual prepared by Miss Elizabeth R. Hooker entitled HOW CAN LOCAL CHURCHES COME TOGETHER, and issued by the Home Missions Council. These might serve as a basis for the discussion of those instructed to prepare the draft. Some of them are included in the Appendices.

CHAPTER III

Discussion of the Draft Scheme of Union

THIS meeting should be held only when the draft scheme is ready for submission to the Joint Commission. It will then probably be discussed clause by clause. After the document has been so considered, the following questions may be asked:

1. Which of the clauses in the proposed draft should be revised,

a. Because of significant omissions (cf. findings in Part I; Chapter IV),
b. Because of unnecessary insertions,
c. Because of lack of clarity,
d. Because of unhappy phrasing?

2. What assurances have we that the denominational boards with which the various churches are connected would approve and assent to the scheme of union as presented? Would such revisions as have been proposed at this meeting in all probability be acceptable to them?

3. Such final action as the churches may take, authorizing any scheme of union would necessarily, in certain instances at least, be conditioned upon some of the following:

i. Concurrent action of other parties to the proposed scheme of union,

ii. Final approval and ratification of denomination with which connected,

iii. Acceptance by the denomination with which a new relationship, if any, is sought,

iv. Permission on the part of the state legislature for necessary changes in the act of incorporation.

a. Which of these safeguards should be made in any preamble to the resolutions authorizing the scheme of union?

b. What other safeguards, not mentioned above, should be provided for in such a preamble?

4. The draft, so revised, might be presented for the consideration of the entire church:

i. By mailing a copy of the draft marked "tentative" or "proposed draft" to each of the voting members, asking for any suggestions or criticisms.

ii. By calling a meeting of the church to consider "in committee" and informally the proposed draft, preliminary to final revision.

iii. By calling a meeting of the church in due form to hear and act finally upon the draft.

a. In what other ways than those mentioned above could the will of the church on the proposed draft be discovered?

b. Which of these methods should be tried and in what order?

5. What provisions shall be made, then, for the submission of the draft to the church?

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS

SUGGESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION LEADERS

I. The Selection of the Group

Size of the Group

The group that uses this outline should not be large. More intensive and satisfactory work can ordinarily be done when the group does not exceed twelve or fifteen. With an able discussion leader, the membership may possibly be increased to twenty or even thirty, but in such cases it may be found best to divide the class into two or more groups, letting each meet separately, although they should be brought together occasionally to compare notes or for the purpose of securing first-hand information from an expert especially introduced for the occasion. This would be particularly advisable when the second part of the discussion is reached.

Types of Groups

The outline may properly be used by either informal and unofficial groups or else by formal and official groups. Such groups may be composed in the following ways:

A. *The Informal or Unofficial Group.*

1. Church Groups.

In an increasing number of churches discussion groups of men, women, young people, or even mixed membership are in existence. Such groups would find the discussion of the questions here proposed both timely and interesting. In many churches the mid-week meeting might well be devoted to a thorough consideration of these problems over a period of weeks. Or, if the time does not seem ripe for such a study with groups already in existence, it ought not to be difficult to gather together a few persons for a limited number of weeks for the specific purpose of discussing the questions quite informally.

2. Community Groups.

In some cases it will be desirable to get together a group consisting of members of various denominations who have a real concern for a better community life, and who are interested in effecting a wise integration of church life with other forms of social activity in the community. Certain social workers may well take the initiative in organizing such a group.

But when the discussion is carried on by such an informal or unofficial group, one fact should be borne in mind from the outset, *viz.*, when the third part of the discussion is reached, the group will be handicapped by its unofficial status. If it attempts to promote a definite scheme of union, it may only create opposition from official boards who will consider the well-intentioned activity as interference.

Its main work, therefore, will probably cease with the completion of the second part of the discussion. There is no reason, however, why the group might not well communicate with the official boards, suggesting a study on their part and offering assistance and cooperation if desired.

B. *The Formal or Official Group.*

1. Church Groups.

Because of the limitations in the informal group, many local churches will prefer to try out the discussion not in such regular classes, but with a specially constituted group, representing for the most part a cross section of the outstanding officials in the church. It may be quite possible in many churches to get together all the members of the official boards, including boards of trustees, elders, deacons, executive committees of men's and women's clubs and young people's organizations, etc., and have such a representative group work through the outline. Such conclusions, if any, as are reached by such a group, could then be much more easily projected into the life of the whole church or the community. Where, because of the number involved or the difficulty of securing a convenient time of meeting, it will not be possible to get together all the boards as has just been proposed, each of the official boards may well be asked to select representatives to sit in on the discussion.

Should the official group of any given church, having canvassed the situation, decide that it is advisable to enter into conversations or negotiations with one or more other churches with a view to a joint study of the possibilities of union, it may very properly, having completed the study of Parts I and II, send a letter to the official boards of the

other local churches concerned, inviting them to share in the further study of the problem.

2. Interchurch Groups.

In some communities where there have been preliminary "conversations" between two or more churches, the discussion hereinafter proposed may very possibly be carried on from the very beginning, with a group officially representing both or all of the churches concerned. It is not improbable, however, that even in these cases the discussion in Part I may more properly be held by each church group meeting separately. If, in the consideration of Part I, both or all of these groups concerned reach a common decision in favor of some form of church union, they might then properly come together to compare notes on the course of their respective discussions to date, and to take up jointly the various problems raised in Parts II and III. In such an event, it would of course be better for each church group to select special representatives to the joint commission, since it is most desirable that none of these groups should be unwieldy.

Whether the official group is limited to one church or is inter-church in its composition, it should clearly understand that it cannot commit the respective churches to its findings, but should simply explore the ground with a view to discovering possible solutions which may then be referred back to respective bodies for consideration and action.

Diversity of Outlook Desirable.

When the group is an official group, it should be really representative, not only of the official boards

but also of various temperaments and attitudes toward a united church which may be found in the constituency it is supposed to represent.

It would be undesirable, for instance, to have the group, when it meets, reveal only on the one hand a general enthusiasm for union or on the other hand a general opposition to it. If there are men or women who are known to be proponents of a united church, they should be represented. Possibly their enthusiasm may cool when they confront the actual problems involved in union. If on the other hand there are known to be those who for various reasons do not believe in the desirability of church union, they, too, should be represented in the initial discussion, since the factoring out of the situation may serve to eliminate many of their fears. The majority of the group will probably consist of persons who have no strong convictions on either side, but who may possibly moderate the warmth of either of the extremists. The result should, therefore, be a solution in which the essential values maintained by all parties will be duly conserved.

Some attention should also be paid to geographical differences. Thus, if some of the clientele of the church live in a community a little separated from the rest and have a peculiar stake in any proposed merger on that account, they should be represented in the commission making the official study.

Should the Minister Join the Group?

It will be well if the initiative in undertaking the study comes from interested laymen, since the personal stake of the minister may make him somewhat hesitant to launch the enterprise. Any move on his part, either in favor of or against a union of the churches, may be misinterpreted as inspired by personal reasons. If he is for union, he may be accused of being discouraged and of having no faith in his own church; if he is against it, he may seem to be afraid of losing his job. Moreover, even if a minister is quite prepared to leave his church in order that certain churches may come together, he must still face the implications of his ministerial standing in the denomination with which he is connected. He may, therefore, feel that the denomination may hold him responsible for initiating a move looking toward local church union, and this may affect his ability to secure a desirable pastorate in another field.

In spite of all this, however, in many if not most cases, the initiative must come from the minister, directly or indirectly. Even when it does not, he may still possibly sit in as a member of the group, provided he is ready to adjust his own personal program to conform with the will of the community. Even under these circumstances, at any point in the discussion when the qualities of a minister adequate

to meet the needs of the community are being considered, a due sense of propriety will suggest to him the advisability of being absent. In any case, however, he should be kept in touch with the course of the discussion; and even if he is not a member of the group, he may be especially invited to certain sessions when subjects are up for discussion upon which he may properly be expected to speak with a special measure of authority, knowledge, and experience.

II. Qualities of Leadership

If the group making the study is a regular church class, it will probably though not necessarily use its own leader or teacher. If the group is an informal community group, the leader will probably be selected by themselves. If the group is an official group, it may seem wise to have the moderator of the church or the chairman of one of the official boards act as leader. Under all circumstances, however, the leader of the discussion should be a person who either knows already or is willing to learn the differences between leading a discussion group and either teaching a class or presiding at a meeting. He should, therefore, study the Inquiry pamphlet entitled *Creative Discussion* (Revised Edition, 1927) particularly pages 31 to 46. As an absolute minimum:

"Leaders should take to heart four maxims of caution, namely:

1. Don't take sides.
2. Don't talk too much.
3. Don't let anyone monopolize the talking.
4. Don't be frightened by prejudice."

III. Where to Hold the Meetings

In most cases meetings will probably be held in churches, although private homes when large enough serve to give them an informality not often found elsewhere. This would be particularly true of joint meetings of representatives of two or more churches. There may be a certain advantage in meeting on neutral ground. As Professor Sheffield says in the pamphlet just referred to:

"Make their setting, therefore, the most attractive room that can be found. It should be a hall of echoes for notes of good feeling in what is said. Groups too often try to create the atmosphere of a fellowship in the chalky bleakness of a classroom. The chairs should be comfortable, and arranged horseshoewise, to bring everybody into the picture."

Wherever the meeting is held, the leader will find the presence of a blackboard sometimes useful for this kind of discussion. A group will keep to the point much better if the course of the discussion is designated step by step on such a board and kept

constantly before them. They will then be able to deal with each point which is brought up and not leave it until it has been given its proper disposition.

IV. Keeping Records of the Discussion

It is highly desirable for a fairly full and accurate record of each separate discussion to be kept, and for this reason it will be advisable to appoint at the very first meeting, if he has not already been selected, some one who shall keep this record. The recorder may possibly be hindered from full participation in the discussion. However, this sacrifice may be well worth making.

The recorder should transcribe his notes as soon after the meeting as possible and, where practicable, should have made enough typewritten copies to meet the following needs:

a. The leader of the group should be given a copy, since a careful study of what took place will help him to see where possibly he may have allowed the discussion to digress or to become confused; or where certain alleged facts may invite further probing; or where muddled thinking existed; or where he himself or other individuals may have promised to look up certain matters and report on them. In the light of this record, he may not only be able to improve his own leadership but also more wisely to prepare the agenda for the following meeting.

b. The recorder should keep one copy for his own use and as the official record.

c. Copies, when furnished to all the participating members of the group in advance of, or at the very beginning of, the next session, make much easier the "summary of the discussion to date" which ordinarily should be given by the leader at the outset of the meeting. This, however, is not essential.

Since the records of a discussion instituted by one group may be sought by other groups invited to join the study later on, extra copies will be useful. Thus the official board of the church may desire to consult the records of the voluntary group which has invited them to make the study. So, too, when the official group of one church meets with an official group of another church, an interchange of records may possibly be helpful.

V. The Use of Specialists

At various points in the discussion questions will arise upon which it may be well to consult experts. The local ministers may well be deemed sufficient in many instances, involving the interpretation of denominational attitudes and complexities.

In the field of interdenominational cooperation, the executive secretaries of neighboring federations or councils of churches may be glad to visit a community or a church club and tell just what has been done in other communities. Executive officers of the Federal Council of Churches of Christ in

America or of the Home Missions Council may also be called upon for such a purpose.

If there is in the neighborhood a church formed through the amalgamation of two or more churches, the minister of such a church may be asked to tell how well the experiment had worked and where it had failed to meet expectations and hopes.

In addition to this, special scientific studies in the field of united churches have been made by the Institute of Social and Religious Research, located at 370 Seventh Avenue, New York City, and that organization may furnish the names of persons able to make suggestions as to how the local situations could be best handled.

VI. Selected Reading List

The literature dealing with the subject of Christian unity is voluminous. For example, the World's Committee, Y.M.C.A., 3 Rue General Dufour, Geneva, Switzerland, recently published a bibliography containing 480 titles of brochures and volumes which have appeared in one or more of six different languages. The compilers have drawn freely upon literature issued under Roman Catholic, Protestant, and Eastern Orthodox auspices. This list may be obtained from the Geneva office, at a cost of two Swiss francs (about forty cents) a copy.

Equally voluminous is the literature of denomi-

nationalism, which explains and defends the distinctive tenets and practices of the different sects. It would be quite impossible to list here even the most authoritative books on the various denominations. We have, however, included in the special reading list at the end of Discussion I, three or four books which aim to present in an impartial manner the various points of view as to doctrine, polity, etc. Further suggestions may be obtained by communicating with the various denominational headquarters.*

The World Conference on Faith and Order has established a loan library of 93 books, "to facilitate the study and discussion of questions of Faith and Order." A catalogue of these books has been published and may be obtained free on application to the secretary, P. O. Box 226, Boston, Massachusetts, U. S. A. The books in this list may be borrowed without charge. The borrower will be requested to sign and return an acknowledgment which he will find enclosed with the book. A monthly reminder will be sent to those who have not returned the volumes borrowed.

These books, however, deal more particularly with the general problem of Christian Unity rather than the specific problem of the church in the community.

* While the denominations have their several defenders, few writers have elaborated a defense of "sectarianism" as such. In a recent issue of *Scribner's* (August, 1927) an article entitled "The Beneficent Barrier of Sects," maintains the thesis that sectarianism is a very good thing since the churches, if they united, would become politically, morally, and spiritually intolerant.

For those who have access to a well-equipped public or private library, a number of bibliographical subjects have been included in connection with the outline proper. For those, however, who have little access to libraries, and who will undoubtedly need some help other than what may be contained in this volume, we suggest the following minimum bibliography.

Hooker, Elizabeth R., *United Churches.* New York, George H. Doran Company, 1926, 306 pages, price $2.75.

An account of four types of united church, with a discussion of their problems and adjustment to them, based on an extensive survey under the auspices of the Institute of Social and Religious Research. The most scientific study of the subject of our problem available at the present time, and an indispensable reference book for those studying the problems covered in this section of the discussion.

Hooker, Elizabeth R., *How Can Local Churches Come Together?* A Hand-Book of Principles and Methods. Committee on Comity and Cooperation—Home Missions Council, 105 East 22nd Street, 82 pages, price 25 cents.

This is a hand-book of principles and methods and gives practical counsel to those who wish to effect some form of local church unity. The author has perhaps a bias in favor of churches of the "federated" type but nevertheless states quite fairly the advantages and disadvantages of each of the various types considered. A

valuable part of the book is given to a description of the distinctive characteristics of each of the major denominations under Polity, Doctrine, Admission to Membership, Sacramental Observations, Liturgy, Requirements and Selections of Ministers, Legislation relative to Property and Distinctive Practices. It also contains suggested forms of constitution for the federated church, affiliated church and undenominational church, and a larger parish. It further contains a list of the names and addresses of the denominational and inter-denominational officials who have a major concern for comity and whose advice in any local situation might be valuable.

Piper, David R., *Community Churches.* Willett, Clark and Colby, 1928, 158 pages, price $1.50.

The significance of this book is in the fact that it is the product of an editorial committee and is sent out with the approval of a group of representative community church pastors and laymen. This suggests that the book has a definite bias in favor of independent community churches and against denominationalism of all kinds. Nevertheless, it represents what is probably the most authentic statement of the champions of the undenominational church.

APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Questionnaire

(To be used in discovering the feeling of people in our town towards a proposed merger of churches.)

It has been proposed that the following churches in Hometown seek ways and means of effecting a closer working relationship with one another, if not corporate union:

Wesleyan Church
Knox Church
Beecher Church

A commission which is studying the local situation wishes to obtain the opinion of the Protestant neighbors as to the advisability of this step. To this end, will you be good enough to answer the following questions:

I. Are you a member or an adherent of any local church? ..... If so, which one? .....

II. (*To be answered only (a) by members of those local churches whose union is proposed or else (b) by members of the community who have no local church connection whatever.*)

In case the union of the churches mentioned above were effected, would you probably become more active or less active in the work of the united church than you are at the present time in any of the individual churches?

If more active: why? .....

If less active: why? .....

III. If a united church were formed, do you feel that it should be affiliated with some particular denomination or

denominations, or should the church be strictly undenominational or, as it is sometimes called, a "community church"?

.....

.....

IV. If it were to be connected with some denomination, what denomination would be

(a) Your first preference? .....

(b) Your second preference? .....

V. Do you believe that any of the existing buildings belonging to the churches considering union would prove satisfactory as a future plant for the united church? If so, which?

(a) In architecture? .....

(b) In capacity and accommodations for social work?...

.....

(c) In location? .....

If not, what course would you recommend? .....

.....

VI. Draw a line through any of the denominations of churches listed below which you personally would hesitate to join or attend.

Baptist	Methodist
Christian Science	Presbyterian
Congregational	Protestant Episcopal
Disciples	Reformed
Evangelical	Unitarian
Lutheran	Universalist

In communities where this outline might be used, care should be taken to insert the names of all Protestant denominations represented in the community. Denominations mentioned on the above list which are not important in the locality might well be omitted.

APPENDIX B

Suggested Constitution for a Larger Parish

(*This constitution is that of a particular larger parish.*)

Believing that friendly cooperation in religious and social welfare work tends to avoid duplication and unnecessary waste, that it helps to develop community life and a spirit of good fellowship, and that it makes possible a program of Christian activities so comprehensive as to be of vital importance to the Kingdom of God, we, the undersigned, do hereby pledge our loyal support to the following constitution:

1. Name—This organization shall be known as the ..... Larger Parish.

2. Object—Its object shall be to promote the social, moral and religious welfare of the district by uniting in one organization the various activities of the ..... Church of ....., the ..... Church at ....., and such other churches, religious bodies and social welfare agencies as may be admitted, from time to time, by vote of the council.

3. Membership—All persons holding membership in the affiliated churches of the district may become members of this organization by signing the constitution. Others may be elected to membership by a majority vote of the council, providing they are accustomed to spend at least two months of the year in residence in the ..... district, that they contribute annually to the support of the work, and sign the constitution.

4. Council—The council shall consist of representatives chosen as follows:

Two from each of the affiliated churches, each church voting separately for its own representatives.

Six from the elected membership of the parish, to be chosen by a majority vote of the church representatives on the council.

All staff-workers ex-officio, but with no power to vote on questions pertaining to their employment or salary.

Members of the council shall hold office for two years, except that in 19.. each church shall elect one representative to serve for only one year, and these shall choose three from the elected membership of the parish to serve for only one year.

The council shall be the executive body of the organization with power to engage the staff workers, appoint committees, raise and distribute funds, and provide for such activities as will most effectually carry out the purpose of the ..... Larger Parish.

It shall have as its officers a chairman, who will act as the official head of the Larger Parish, and a secretary and treasurer who shall act as secretary and treasurer of the parish.

The council shall hold monthly meetings, keep an accurate account of its proceedings, and shall present an annual statement to the parish, giving a full report of each year's work.

5. Staff Workers—It shall be the aim of the parish to maintain a multiple ministry consisting of two co-pastors and at least one social-service director. One pastor shall have charge primarily of the preaching and public worship; the other shall be chiefly responsible for the work of religious education through Sunday schools, Bible classes and kindred agencies. The social director or directors shall develop the recreational side of the community life, arranging for entertainments, social gatherings and various kinds of outdoor and indoor activities.

6. Meetings—There shall be an annual meeting of the Larger Parish held on or near the first of ....., at which time the council shall make its report, plans for the ensuing year be discussed, and other business of a general character be transacted.

Immediately following this meeting, the affiliated churches shall elect their representatives to the council, and these in turn, and without delay, shall elect those who are to represent the parish at large. No business shall be transacted by the council until its membership is completed and its officers elected.

7. Amendment—This constitution may be altered or amended at any meeting of the council by a two-thirds' vote of the members present, providing due notice in writing of the proposed alteration or amendment shall have been sent to each member not less than one month in advance.

APPENDIX C

Constitution for a Local Council of Churches Suggested by the Federal Council of Churches

PREAMBLE

In the providence of God, the time has come more fully to manifest the essential oneness of the Christian Churches of ..... in Jesus Christ as their Divine Lord and Savior, and to promote the spirit of fellowship, service, and cooperation among them.

Article I—Name

The name of this organization shall be "The ..... Council of Churches."

Article II—Object

The object of this Council shall be to promote the welfare, fellowship, and cooperation of the Churches and to foster religious movements and community betterment.

Article III—Membership

Section 1. This Council shall be composed of those churches * in (————) and vicinity that shall agree by their respective authorized methods, to unite with this organization. Each church shall be represented in the Council by the pastor and two lay members, and one additional lay

* The Pittsburgh, New York, and Detroit Councils are composed of ecclesiastical bodies (conferences, presbyteries, etc.) instead of congregations.

member for each two hundred members or major fraction thereof above the first two hundred members.

Note.—Both men and women are eligible to membership.

Section 2. It shall also be competent for the Council to admit to its membership by vote any person as a corresponding member with the right to vote; among these corresponding members being representatives of denominational city extension societies, Sunday School Associations, the Young Men's Christian Association, the Young Women's Christian Association, and such other organizations as the Council may determine. These members shall be nominated to the Council by the respective organizations they are to represent.

Section 3. Any church in the Council unwilling to cooperate in a movement determined upon by the Council shall be excused therefrom upon its request to that effect in writing, duly presented to the Council.

Section 4. Any church that shall decide according to its authorized methods to withdraw from the Council shall duly certify in writing such action to the Council.

Article IV—The Assembly

Section 1. There shall be a governing body to be known as the Assembly of the (————) Council of Churches, composed of the officially appointed representatives of the churches in its membership, together with the officers of the Council and the members of the Executive Committee of the departments and committees.

Section 2. The Assembly shall hold annual meetings and such other meetings as are provided for in the by-laws of this Council.

Section 3. Special meetings of the Assembly may be called by the President or the Executive Committee or at the re-

quest of nine members representing three or more denominations.

Article V—Officers

Section 1. The officers of the Council shall be President, two (or more) Vice-Presidents, a Recording and Corresponding Secretary, a Treasurer, and such other officers as shall be found necessary, all of whom shall be elected by the Assembly at its annual meetings and shall serve until the next annual meeting, or until their successors are qualified.

Section 2. The President, or in his absence a Vice-President, shall preside at all meetings of the Assembly. He shall appoint all committees except where otherwise provided by the Council.

Section 3. The Recording Secretary and the Treasurer shall keep the minutes of all meetings, records and accounts in permanent form in suitable books which shall be the property of the Council, and to be turned over on demand of their successors in office.

Article VI—Committees

Section 1. There shall be an Executive Committee to act for the Council in the interim between the meetings of the Assembly, and to carry out its policies, to consist of the President, Vice-Presidents, Recording and Corresponding Secretary, Treasurer and Chairman of Departments, and five or more persons, selected by the Council with proper regard for denominational, interdenominational, and lay representation. The Executive Committee may elect its own Chairman. It is empowered to employ an Executive Secretary when the financial support is assured. He will work under the direction of this Committee.

Section 2. The Executive Committee may appoint such

other committees or establish such departments as the work of the Council may demand.*

Article VII—Finances

Section 1. The Assembly shall annually decide upon a budget of expenditures and shall ask the churches which belong to the Council to share in the same on some basis mutually agreed upon.

Section 2. No bill exceeding $50.00 shall be incurred by any officer or committee or department, except upon the approval of the Executive Committee, and all bills before payment shall be countersigned by the Chairman of the Executive or Finance Committee.

Section 3. Funds for special work for which provision has not been made in the annual budget may be raised only upon the approval of the Executive Committee.

Article VIII—Quorum

Section 1. A quorum of any meeting of the Assembly shall consist of .... members, representing forty per cent. of the denominations having relation to the Council, and at any meeting of a Committee, a majority of its members; or, if any Committee shall consist of more than nine members, a quorum shall be five.

Article IX—Elections

All elections shall be by ballot.

Article X—Amendments

Section 1. This Constitution may be amended at any meeting of the Assembly by two-thirds vote of the members

* No standard program of activities is proposed in this tentative plan of organization. What the program shall be depends upon the needs of the community and the resources of the council.

present, which vote includes a majority of the denominations being represented by the members present; provided that due notice of any proposed amendment shall be given in writing at a preceding meeting of the Assembly or by mailing to each member of the Assembly at least ten days prior to the meeting of the Assembly at which such amendment is to be submitted, a copy of the proposed amendment signed by at least five members of the Council representing at least three of the denominations represented.

APPENDIX D

Suggested Constitution for an Undenominational Church *

Article I. Name

The name of this church, under which it shall be incorporated according to the laws of the state, shall be the ..... Church of .....

Article II. Purposes

The purposes of this church shall be to unite the Christian forces of this community, thus making it possible to maintain a high level of worship, of religious education and of community service; and to promote the interests of the Kingdom of God here and throughout the world.

Article III. Government

This church is self-governing, being subject to the control of no other ecclesiastical body. Authority is vested in its members. All questions shall be decided by majority vote,

* Another form of constitution for an undenominational church, and couched in less evangelical phraseology, may be found in Piper's "Community Churches," pages 148 *et seq.* It must be remembered that there is a wide diversity of types of community churches. A few of them use the word "Christian" sparingly; others adhere to a very conservative position. Thus, the magazine *Pioneers of a New Era* which claims to be a Community Church advocate and the official organ of the American Conference of Undenominational Churches announces that it stands for "the infallibility of the scriptures; the deity and atonement of Jesus Christ; the union of all Christians upon the Bible; the second coming of our Lord; the resurrection of the body and life everlasting." An undenominational church in Rochester, N. Y., recently notified the city Federation of Churches there that it could not cooperate in the movement for week-day religious education because of the Unitarian or modernistic temper of those promoting the enterprise.

except as is otherwise provided herein (*or,* The executive functions of the church shall be performed by the church council, the acts of which shall be binding upon the church).

Article IV. Members

Section 1. The members of this church shall include—

a. The members of the constituent churches.*

b. Persons bringing letters from other churches of any Protestant (*or,* evangelical Protestant) denominations without being subjected to doctrinal or other tests which do not accord with the standards of their respective faiths.

c. Persons making public confession of faith and being baptized (if not already baptized), after a recommendation by the church council and vote of the church.

Section 2. Persons desiring to affiliate with this church without withdrawing their membership from another church of whatever denomination (*or,* of any evangelical denomination), may on recommendation of the church council and vote of the church be received as associate members. Associate members shall have the same responsibilities and the same rights as regular members, (*or,* shall have the same responsibilities as regular members and the same rights with the following exceptions: *specified*).

Section 2. Each member received (*or,* Sec. 3. Each member received, whether regular or associate), will assent to the following covenant:

"I believe with all my heart that Jesus Christ is the son of God and the Savior of men. Accepting Him as my Savior and seeking the guidance of the Holy Spirit, I promise to obey Him in all things according to the measure of my knowledge of His will. It is my purpose to the extent of

* If inappropriate, omit section a, renumbering the other sections.

my ability to cooperate with my fellow-members in the support of His Church and in the extension of its influence," * or,

> "Believing in Jesus Christ and His leadership, and wishing to unite with others in the service of my fellowmen and for mutual assistance in the Christian life, I hereby enroll myself a member of the ..... Church."

Article V. Officers

Section 1. The officers of the church shall be three (*or,* six; *or* nine *of each kind of officers*) elders (*or,* deacons), three trustees, a clerk and a treasurer (a financial secretary, a head usher). Their duties shall be those usually performed by such church officers.

Section 2. The clerk, the treasurer, one elder (*or,* deacon), and one trustee (*or, one-third the total number of each kind of officers*) shall be elected yearly at the annual meeting of the church.

Article VI. Pastor

Section 1. The pastor shall be chosen by the members of the church on recommendation of the church council (*or,* by the church council). He must be an ordained minister, in good and regular standing in one of the recognized denominations. He must be in sympathy with the principles of the church as embodied in this constitution; and he must be prepared either to perform baptism in any one of the three usual ways, or on occasion to ask the services of some qualified minister.

Section 2. The pastoral relation may be terminated on three months' notice, either by the pastor or by the church (*or,* by the church council).

* The covenants suggested are both in actual use.

Article VII. Church Council

Section 1. The church officers, with the superintendent of the Sunday school, the presidents of auxiliary organizations, and the chairmen of standing committees, shall form the church council, *or,*

Section 1. There shall be a church council of ..... members, of whom at least one and not more than ..... shall be drawn from each of the strong denominational elements of the church. Half the members shall be elected each year at the annual meeting of the church.

Section 2. The church council shall hold regular meetings every two months, and special meetings at the call of the pastor, of the chairman of the council or of any three of its members.

Section 3. ..... members of the council shall constitute a quorum.

Section 4. Duties:

a. The church council shall conduct the common affairs, subject to the advice and approval of the church, *or,*

a. The church council shall have such powers as may enable it to carry on effectively the work of the church.

b. The council shall propose to the church (*or,* prepare) a budget for the ensuing year, and shall put into operation a plan for systematic contributions, on the part of all members and constituents, both for local church expenditures and for benevolences.

c. Under the direction of the church, the council shall administer all church property (*or,* The council shall administer all church property). Any building used by the united church, the title to which is held by a constituent church, shall be under the charge of the council, who shall oversee its use and provide for its maintenance and repair.

The income from any invested funds held by a constituent church shall be put at the disposal of the council, who under the direction of the church shall administer it for the good of the united body (*or,* who shall administer it for the good of the united body).*

d. The council shall recommend to the church any policies that they may consider desirable, *or,*

d. The council shall take any other measures that may seem to them to be for the good of the church.

Article VIII. Meetings

Section 1. The annual meeting shall be held on the first (day of week) of (month). Notice shall be given on two preceding Sundays.

Section 2. All elections of officers shall be by ballot.

Section 3. At least two weeks before the annual meeting the church council (*or,* a nominating committee appointed by the church council) shall announce nominations for all offices that are to be filled, *or,*

Section 3. The first ballot shall be informal, for selection of nominees, those having the three highest number of votes being nominated.

Section 4. Special meetings of the church may be called by the pastor, by the council, or by any five members of the church, notice being given on two preceding Sundays.

Section 5. All members (*or,* All members both regular and associate; *or,* All regular members; *or,* Except as otherwise provided, all members) over the age of ..... shall have the right to vote.

Section 6. In all meetings of the church ..... members shall constitute a quorum.

* Omit any part of c that is not appropriate.

Article IX. Ordinances

Section 1. The ordinance of baptism shall be administered in any of the common forms, as the candidate may desire.

Section 2. The children of any parents desiring it shall be baptized or consecrated.

Section 3. The Lord's Supper shall be observed on the first Sunday of every month (*or,* of January, March, May, July, September and November). An invitation to participate shall be extended to all who love the Lord Jesus Christ.

Article X. Amendments

This constitution may be amended at any business meeting of the church by a two-thirds' vote of the members present, provided that notice of the proposed amendment is given in the call.

APPENDIX E

Suggested Constitution for a Federated Church

As recommended by the Massachusetts Federation of Churches

PREAMBLE

The ..... and the ..... Churches of ..... in order the better to fulfill their common mission to the community, to conserve the resources of the Kingdom of God, and to promote the unity of His disciples for which Christ prayed, do hereby adopt the following Articles of Agreement and constitute themselves the Federated Church of .....

Ratified and adopted by the

..... Church on the .... of ....., 19....

..... Church on the .... of ....., 19....

..... Church on the .... of ....., 19....

Article I. Purpose

The churches above named hereby agree to form, and act as, one congregation for all purposes of work and worship.

Article II. The Joint Committee

Section 1. To carry out this purpose, each church, acting according to its policy or discipline, shall appoint .... persons, to serve for one year or until their successors are chosen,

who, with the pastor and clerk ex-officis, shall constitute a Joint Committee.

Section 2. The pastor shall act as chairman of the Joint Committee, except when his own relation to the Federated Church is the business in hand. In the absence of the pastor, the Joint Committee shall elect a chairman, *pro tem.*

Section 3. ..... members of the Committee shall constitute a quorum.

Article III. Business Affairs

Section 1. The Joint Committee shall have the management of all business affairs, subject to the advice and approval of the constituent Churches.

Section 2. Each church, or its society or trustees, shall give to the Joint Committee the use of its land and buildings and the income of all invested funds which it holds or may receive, except as otherwise mutually agreed.

Section 3. The Joint Committee shall decide the use of lands and buildings, and assume all expenses of maintenance, insurance and repairs.

Section 4. The Joint Committee shall put into operation a plan for systematic contributions which shall give every member of the congregation and its constituency an opportunity to share in the support of worship and benevolences.

Article IV. Church Affairs

Section 1. The members of the several churches shall be enrolled as members of the Federated Church.

Section 2. Members hereafter added, by letter or on confession, may choose in which Church they shall be enrolled and the form of their public reception.

Section 3. All questions regarding the Ordinance of Baptism shall be left to the conscience of the individual mem-

ber. The pastor may, if he choose, secure the services of any ordained clergyman to administer the rite in the manner desired.

Section 4. The Lord's Supper shall be observed at such times and in such manner as the constituent churches shall agree.

Section 5. So far as the polity or discipline of the constituent churches permits, the members of the Federated Church shall decide all questions of work and worship, annually elect a clerk and a treasurer and such other officers and committees as shall be necessary, in addition to the Joint Committee, and call and dismiss a pastor. In case that the polity or discipline of any one of the constituent churches so requires, the churches shall act concurrently, each according to its denominational usage.

Section 6. Questions of discipline or church standing shall be referred to the church to which belong the members whose standing is in question.

Section 7. In all meetings of the Federated Church, ... members shall constitute a quorum.

Article V. Relation to Denominations

Section 1. Each church shall continue unchanged its relation to the denominational body to which it belongs, reporting its work as a member of the Federated Church.

Section 2. Missionary information shall be given and contributions for missions and other benevolences taken in accordance with the plans of the denominations of the constituent churches. Each donor may designate to which denominational board his offering shall be sent and undesignated offerings shall be divided equally.

Article VI. Meetings

Section 1. The annual meeting of the Federated Church shall be held on the ..... of ....., and the meetings of the constituent churches to elect their members of the Joint Committee, at a date as near it as practicable. Notice shall be given two preceding Sundays.

Article VII. Amendments and Advice

Section 1. Amendment of these Articles of Agreement may be made at any meeting of the Federated Church, by a two-thirds vote of the members present, provided notice of the proposed amendment be given in the call, subject to ratification by each of the constituent churches according to its polity or discipline.

Section 2. In case any question shall arise under these Articles which the Federated Church is unable to settle, such question shall be referred to a committee consisting of a representative of the denomination of each of the constituent churches, who, if found necessary, may select additional arbitrators.

Section 3. In case at any time any of the constituent churches shall vote that circumstances make it inadvisable to continue this agreement, six months' notice shall be given to the other churches.

APPENDIX F

Agreement of Association, Legally Creating the Amalgamation into the United Church in Walpole, Massachusetts, of Three Churches (Congregational, Unitarian and Methodist Episcopal).*

AGREEMENT OF ASSOCIATION

COMMONWEALTH OF MASSACHUSETTS

We, whose names are hereunto subscribed, do, by this agreement, associate ourselves with the intention of forming a corporation according to the provisions of chapter one hundred and eighty of the General Laws, and the Acts in amendment thereof and in addition thereto.

The name by which the corporation shall be known is

UNITED CHURCH IN WALPOLE

The location of the principal office of the corporation to be in the Commonwealth is the Town of Walpole, Massachusetts,

The corporation is constituted for the following purposes, to wit:—

The maintaining of religious worship in conformity with the usages of the Congregational Church and especially to take over and carry on the services of worship and other

* This particular amalgamation, while apparently satisfactory to the local churches combining, provoked some dissatisfaction on the part of certain of the denominational overhead authorities. The agreement is here given as a sample of the means used to create a new corporation in accordance with the legal requirements of a given state.

activities now maintained by the Walpole Congregational Church, the first Parish Unitarian Church in Walpole, and the Methodist Episcopal Church in Walpole, and as auxiliary thereto to carry on such educational and benevolent work as may be for the public welfare and may tend to improve the spiritual, mental, social and physical condition of the members of the church and of the members of the community in which the church is located; and to that end to receive and hold, with the consent of the proper authorities, all the property, real and personal, now owned by the said churches and the deacons of said churches, and the trustees thereof, and by the first Parish in Walpole, or by any other bodies affiliated with said churches, names as above stated, or however otherwise named or designated.

And we, whose names are hereto subscribed, do in the love of truth and the spirit of Jesus Christ unite for the worship of God and the service of man, and as the Lord's free people, we agree to walk together in all His ways made known, or to be made known, unto us.

Waiver of Notice

We hereby waive all requirements of the general laws of Massachusetts for notice of the first meeting for organization, and appoint the 25th day of October, 1927, at eight o'clock P.M., at the church of the Walpole Congregational Church in Walpole, on East Street, as the time and place of holding said first meeting.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, we have hereunto set our hands this 25th day of October, in the year nineteen hundred and twenty-seven.

[Here follow names of incorporators.]

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Suggests ways and means by which Protestant groups can obtain a better understanding of their Catholic neighbors.
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